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2.10.23

SERMON

Preached upon the



Thirtieth of *January*, 169⁴.

I N

The Parish of S. in the County

O F

NORFOLK.

By *Samuel Snowden* Rector *Ibid.*

L O N D O N,

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2. 10. 58

607:90

To the Inhabitants of N. and S.
in the County of Norfolk.

Brethren,

M^Y Hearts desire and prayer to God for you is, that you may be saved; to promote which end, the most powerful Doctrine abstracted from a good Life, too often proves but a weak expedient, the contexture of the mouth, being so easily unravelled by the work of the hands. For whatever we say, yet Men are apt to look on us, and do likewise, and to walk as they have us for an example: Which is more especially true, when we tread awry, or make any false steps. I wish I could in all respects propound my self a pattern fit for your imitation; That with St. Paul, I might safely desire you not only to be almost, but altogether such as I am. But who can pretend to give such advice, that is encompassed with so many constant defects and infirmities; yet I should be glad to see you follow me, so far as I follow Christ, and that I might lead you to him who is the way to himself. The design of this discourse (lately delivered among you) was to warn you not to build, or lay the foundation of your joy and hope upon the Sand, and if you will believe this word of God and keep it, viz. [put

To the Reader.

not your trust in Princes, &c.] you will be built upon a rock that can never be shaken; the wisdom of which counsel hath been justified by too sad and fresh an argument, I mean the fall of a great Person in our Israel, who had not long since the Imperial Crown set upon her Head, and was anointed with Oyl of gladness, (to all who had any value for their Religion and Liberties) or perhaps it was to her Burial, but if not, yet we see it could not prevent it, when the Lord commanded her Breath to go forth, and her Body to return to its Earth. It may be we lean'd too hard, and relied too much upon our staff, which made it buckle under us, and caused the Lord to be so far displeased with us, that he hath taken away the desire of our Eyes, and delight of our Hearts with a stroke; our Jachin, one of the Pillars of our hope from us. May we not in this, or any other way provoke him so far to anger against us, but that he may continue our Boaz to us. But thus many times Parents love their Children to death, being over-kind to them, and fond of them, till they kill them with their kindness, and crush them with their embraces, provoking God to pluck them thence and leave them in a disconsolate estate, who know not how to be comforted, because they are not, whom methinks I hear thus complaining. My Children are taken away, and do you ask me what I ail. Upon this foundation we designed to build our Names and Families, here we had Content and Happiness laid up for many

To the Reader.

many Years, but this Night their Breath is gone forth, and all our thoughts and designs are perished. Our Pitchers (which we perceive were but earthen Vessels) are broken at the Fountain, so that all our purposes and projections are like water spilt upon the ground. Here's a Parable, and you need not go far for the Interpretation of it. We have had the Persons of our Princes in so great admiration, because of those great advantages they have brought to these Nations, that we have forgot the Lord, who was the principal Author of our Deliverance, for which sin perhaps his anger is so remarkably broken out against us, which hath this day caused our Cup to overflow with the tears of our Complaints, and many bitter cries to be heard among us, the Subjects mourning for their Sovereign, because she is not, stiling themselves Icabods for the Glory is departed from our Israel. But whither are our thoughts wandred and our Pen fled? But no wonder, if the sense of our loss hath made such impressions upon our Spirits as to transport us beyond ourselves and subject. But upon a due recollection, let's mourn for those sins which have done us this incomparable injury, if the effects and fruits of them be so bad, what's the root of bitterness from whence they are sprung? Let us pluck it up, and if possible, not leave so much as a stump in the Earth. We have a Prince yet left upon the Throne to go in and out before us, and to fight our Battels, but if we shall still do wickedly, we shall be

To the Reader.

be destroyed both we and our King, 1 Sam. 12. 25. And this would dip our miseries with a scarlet die, and crimson tincture, causing them to be double hatcht, and our latter ends worse than our beginning.

But perhaps 'twill be said, we have too many State-mongers which have troubled the World with such Papers and Pamphlets, when the Kingdom of God and Righteousness thereof, were a more proper subject for their Studies, and Theme for the Pulpit.

Tit. 3. 1.
Put them
in mind of
being sub-
ject to Prin-
cipalities
and Powers
to obey Ma-
gistrates,
&c. How little I have troubled you with things of this nature from thence, when it was not necessary to mind you of being subject to Principalities and Powers, I leave your selves to be judges. But if the duty I owe to God and You, be not sufficient to vouch me, let the objection avail as far as it can against me. Yet of this I am sure, that I am indispensibly bound by virtue of the Office I bear among you, by all the ways I can to promote your future welfare, and everlasting interests. But if I have better consulted them in a more practical Discourse scattered among you, which is the voice of one crying to you, prepare ye the way of * death and make that path streight; I would the more earnestly recommend it to your diligent perusal, which will be no small encouragement to me to study, how I may be most of all serviceable to you in the Work of the Gospel; which as it is the duty, so I hope shall be ever the design of
Febr. 8. 1694.

* Antidote
against the
Poison and
Sting of
Death.

Your most Faithfull
Friend and Servant
Sam. Snowden.

Psalm. 146. v. 3, 4. *Put not your trust in Princes,
nor in the Son of Man, in whom there is no help ;
his breath goeth forth, he returneth to his Earth, in
that very day his thoughts perish.*

THAT the condition of Mankind is not an absolute and independing State, our daily occurring wants, and constant recourses to Heaven for supplies are sufficient proofs. The plants of righteousness (whatever they may be when they shall become Trees of Life in the Paradise of God) are but yet tender. Yea, though they be rooted and grounded in the Faith, will not be able to bear the shock, or weather those blasts, which the Prince of the Power of the Air raises against them, if not staked with supports of greater strength, and better consistency than themselves. St. Peter was the rock of the Church, yet if the rock of Ages (I mean our Saviour) had not held him fast, when like the trembling Pillars of the Earth he was shaken, he must have fallen. *Joh. 9. 6.* Yea, he had been as chaff before the wind, when Satan had desired to winnow him, had not he prayed that his Faith might not fail.

The Wisdom of this just Man, I mean, the Psalmist, appears in directing us to the surest object of our trust, teaching us to be wise Master-builders, not to lay the foundation of our hope in the dust: *Put not your trust in Princes, or in the Son of Man, &c.* But rather to erect our hope upon that which is elect and precious laid in *Sion*, in him, whosoever believeth he shall not be ashamed: *Yea rather happy is the Man who hath the God of Jacob for his help, v. 5.* He would not have us go down to *Egypt* for relief, nor rest.

rest upon a broken staff, or bruised reed, which will not only buckle under us and deceive us, when we lean too hard upon it; but will also run into our sides and pierce us through with grief at the consideration of our disappointment. For if we lay too great a stress, a dead and massy weight upon a weak foundation, we shall soon find a set in our Building, the Fabrick will sink for want of a sufficient basis, and bottom to sustain it.

The Title
which the
Septuag.
gives this
Psalm is
Ἀλλανδία
καὶ Ἰσραὴλ
ζαχαρίου.

לללל

Praise ye
Jah.

The Psalm is a Song of Praise, composed as have been thought, to bless God for the reduction of his People out of Captivity, which was a proper time for *Jacob* to rejoice, and for *Israel* to be glad. Psal. 14. v. 7. *When the Lord bringeth back the captivity of his People, Jacob shall rejoice and Israel shall be glad.*

Next to his resolve of blessing God, he gives advice in what we may not, and in what we may trust, and depend upon, which counsel he justifies in both respects, with undoubted arguments taken partly from the state and circumstances of Man: Partly from the Power, Providence, Goodness, and Eternal Sovereignty of the Divine Being.

The Text tells us where we must not cast anchor, because 'tis no secure harbour to winter in, nor can we under that lee weather the point, seeing no small storms are like to lay upon, and endanger us in our Voyage. *Put not your trust in Princes, nor in the Son of Man, &c.*

Deff.

From whence we observe, that it's a vain thing to repose our confidence in Man, though in the highest exaltation, for relief.

This is to seek for it where it is not to be found, and to suck at a breast for Consolation, which hath none of that sincere Milk. Suppose we get under the shadow of these wings, alas, they are too full of faint plumes, and sick feathers, either to brood or defend us: Nor can we be ever safe under the shelter of such withering and decaying plants. They may truly say as is said in another case, 'tis not ours

to give. Or as the King to the Woman in the Siege of *Samaria*, if the Lord does not help thee, whence should I? In my discourse upon this Theme, I shall first show you, that in our present state and circumstances we stand in need of help and relief. Some to trust in, and to flee to for succour.

2ly. Considering Men in their highest exaltation or best capacities of power and interest, yet they are no proper objects of our trust and dependance.

3ly. We shall inquire whether we may have no recourse to, or expectation from, any humane assistance in time of need.

4ly. Consider what improvement may be made to our advantage.

1st. In our present state and circumstances we stand in need of help and relief. If we be considered in our natural capacities, we are not self-sufficient. It cannot be said of us, as of the Oak and the Teyl-tree, that we have our Substance in our selves, nor that Seed or Sap within us, which can spring up with fresh supplies, and recruit the decays of nature, giving it a green and flourishing drefs, as often as its Leaves shed, or the top of her Carmel withers. Our Cisterns like the Brook *Cherith* are often dry, and presently exhausted. A good Man in this sense cannot be satisfied from himself, his hungry and thirsty appetite teaches him to speak the Language of the Horse-leech, give, give. What need the Raven to have been commissioned to carry the Prophet Bread and Flesh in the Morning, and Bread and Flesh in the Evening, if his wants had not returned upon him like an armed Man? Though our Lamps for the present may shine brightly, yet they'll soon go out, if not kept alive with frequent recruits, and new infusions of Oyl. The natural heat of a Man is a fire that cannot last long, if there were not constant supplies of fuel to maintain it. The wise Man saith, *where no wood is there the fire goes out.* Prov.

Pl 104. 27. 26. 20. *The eyes of all wait upon the Lord for their meat in due season*; by which attendance on his Providence, our wants are not only imply'd and intimated, but clearly proved upon us.

2ly. *Politick*.

Nor are we barely to be considered in our natural, but also in our Politick capacities, in which we often meet with such imbroilment in our affairs, and intanglement in the croud of those occurrences which come cross, and counter upon us, that we many times know not which foot to set forward, or how to direct our steps. St. Paul tells us in *Acts 27. 20. That neither Sun, Moon, nor Stars for many days appeared to them, nor no small tempest laid upon them, insomuch that all hope of being saved was taken away.* And thus it proved in our late conflict with unreasonable Men, the Vessel of our Church and State too was sorely afflicted and tossed with tempest.

We were in such distress, that all hope of being saved was taken away: If he, who was our Pilot and steered our Ship had not held the Winds in his fist, whom therefore those Storms and Waves obey'd; he stilled the raging of the Sea, he quieted the madness of the People, who were so turbulent and impetuous, that which way soever we look'd they cast a sad and fatal aspect upon us. We were in peril of false Brethren, in peril of our own Country-men, in peril of Strangers, persecuted, afflicted, tormented on every side, we knew not which way to turn our selves either to the right hand, or to the left, so that in the midst of life we were in death, which put us upon seeking succour, but not of Princes, or of the Son of Man, for in them there was no help. Which brings me to the second thing I designed to speak to, *viz.*

2ly. That considering Men in their best capacities, or advantages of power and interest, yet they are not proper objects of our trust and dependance. We may catch hold upon these twigs, but they cannot bear our weight, or keep

keep us from sinking, when the Waters of *Mara* over-flow our Banks, or run over our Heads. All their power and interest are but faint and feeble things, ineffectual expedients to save either themselves or others. 'Tis true, they may by great and swelling Titles be dignified and distinguished from others, but these are but *magni nominis umbræ*: And who can sit under those shadows and be safe? They are bubbles tunned with Air which with the Breath of God's Nostrils are presently staved and stifled, and in a moment blasted, so as never to appear: For when the Breath of God goeth forth theirs is stopp'd, and they return to the Earth from whence they were taken. But I shall give some particular reasons to prove, that they are not sufficient objects of our trust. And here I shall shoot no other Arrows, or Arguments, than which we find in the quiver of the Text. The Crowns of Princes may adorn their Heads, but can never secure either theirs, or ours from falling. They may sparkle with Diamonds, and be enrich'd with Jewels, but they are Pearls of no very great price upon this account, seeing Man in his best estate is altogether vanity. *Psal. 39. 5.*

1st. They are not fit to be relied upon, because they cannot help nor relieve us.] And then what need we any other proof? We have heard the Lord's own words. [*Trust not in Princes, nor in the Son of Man in whom there is no help.*] So that all further arguments are superseded, if this be justified, which will not be difficult to do, whilst it appears, that the Crowns of Princes are not placed so high as to be out of Gun-shot, or above the reach of those miseries, which are incident to the rest of Mankind. There Persons are not peculiars, or that can plead the prerogative of Exemption, from those temptations and trials which afflict others. If so, their name would be a strong tower, and those, who are in distress might flee to it, and be safe; but this have proved a weak refuge unto others, whilst

Jan. 30.

*Josh. 10.
34.

they have not been able to secure themselves from the stri-
vings of the People. As the sad theme of this day is no
weak evidence, for the anointed of the Lord was taken in
their net, who said we will not have this Man rule over us,
but brought him, and slew him at the gates of his Palace.
How low were the five Kings of the *Amorites* laid, when
the Captains of *Joshua* set their feet upon their * necks? Nor
could the Imperial Crown which *Frederick* wore defend him
from the insult of Pope *Alexander*, who was basely tram-
pled on by his holiness, or haughtiness rather, perverting
holy writ to an unintended Sense. *Thou shalt tread upon
the Lion and Adder, the young Lion and the Dragon thou
shalt trample under thy feet, Psal. 91. 13.* How then can
they cover us with their feathers? or under their Wings
can we trust? How can they be a strong tower to us from
the faces of our Enemies, who themselves are too often
exposed to their fury, and become a prey to their revenge?
It might be well enough said concerning *Saul*, How shall
this Man save us, who could not secure himself upon the
Throne, but had his Kingdom rent from him, like the skirt
of his Garment? Shall we then lean against a bowing
Wall, or tottering Fence, which are so little able to sup-
port us, that they cannot be a sufficient stay to their own
shaking States, or declining Empires? Let us therefore
cease from Men, who though they be tunned full with po-
pular air, yet their breath is in their nostrils, which pre-
sently goes forth, and they return to the Earth, which in-
duces the second Argument.

2ly. *Viz.* That it is not wisdom to confide in the grea-
test Men, because they are mortal and must die.] Who
would hang too much weight upon that silver Cord, which
is so presently loosed, or fill their Pitcher with any pre-
cious liquor, which is so unexpectedly broken at the Foun-
tain, leaving all our expectation and hope like water spilt
upon the ground, never to be retrieved or gathered up
again?

again? For Man dies, his breath goes forth, that is, the Soul departs, and his body returns to the Earth, being then reduced to its first original; for dust it was, and to dust it shall return, in which repository it is only fit to be laid, and buried out of our sight. Or perhaps the words may be thus read: The breath goes forth but never returns, respiration ceaseth, the motion of the spirits, and circulation of the blood is for ever stopt, upon which stagnation of the humours, the body presently stinks and is corrupt, fit for nothing but its long home, and common receptacle, where it is reduced to its first Principle. *Eccl. 12. 7. Then shall the dust return to the Earth as it was, and the spirit to God who gave it.* Nor is it long to this period; we have not far to travel before we come to the grave, the knot which is tied upon the thread of Life, is easily and presently loosed: We dwell in Cottages that are of Clay, but we have no lease of them, or if we had, 'tis the Owner, not the Tenant which prescribes the term of it, which is not spun out to any great length. For yet a little while and ye shall see us, and yet a little while and ye shall not see us, because we are going to our long home. And no wonder, for whilst we live we may be said to die daily, we being no sooner quit from the Womb, but we are hasting to the Tomb. Our Sun being like that in the Firmament, which from its first rising is immediately posting towards its declension and fall, only with this difference, that this never goes down till it hath run its race, and finish'd its course, for though it may be sometimes accidentally eclipsed, yet it recovers its light and lustre again, keeping itself always above-board, till the shadows of the Evening be drawn over it. When ours many times sets, before 'tis well up, or when it is in its highest exaltation, or vertical point of health and strength, age or honour, sinks into the place of darkness, and goes down into the Land of Forgetfulness. As the decease of our late Gracious Queen is too sad, and pertinent an instance. Which

Egredietur status ejus. Cald. Paraphr.

Which comes to pass, first, from the nature of our Constitution and State, we are made of heavy Clay, which hath always a tendency and inclination downward, and would drop into the Earth from whence it came (that being the hole of the pit from whence we are digged) if the constant kindness and care of Heaven did not prevent the fall. The Beams of our own timber have those worms in them, that though there should be none to pull down, and dilapidate our Buildings, they would fall into decay of their own accord. But 2dly. There be many accidents which drive us faster, and give us speedier dispatches out of this World, than what may be ordinarily expected from the common infirmities, and decays of nature. The thread of life, which might have lasted some time, is suddenly by a violent hand cut off, before it be spun to half the length, to which its staple might in the course of nature have been drawn, and by a violent jumble we are shuff into the Grave; where, and when all our thoughts perish: Which brings me to the third Argument which justifies the Doctrine.

* Purposes
Ainsw.
Eccl. 9. 10.
No work,
vice, nor
knowledge,
nor wisdom,
&c. repente
uno mo-
mento
concidunt
consilia.
Jun. &
Trem.
All their
worldly
contrivances
are frustrated
and evacuated.
Hammon.

3ly. When we be once dead all our *thoughts, all our projects and forecasts, all our counsels and contrivances give up the Ghost. Nor is there any counsel, device, or policy in the Grave, whither we are going. When Man dies, not only the form of his countenance is changed, but the fashion of all his designs passes away. The nest which is built, with so much art and contrivance, though pitch'd upon the highest branches, when the Tree is hewn up falls down, and is levelled with the dust. Who then would put his trust in Princes, or build his hope upon those (tho tall and stately) Cedars which to day are the glory of the Grove, but to morrow become a prey to the Ax, their high and towring tops laid low and level with the ground? With death there is no respect of Persons, he that feareth God, and he that feareth him not, he that is high, and he that is low; yet in this respect stand upon the same level,
and

and are upon even ground. *Job* 34. 19, 20. *God accepteth not the Persons of Princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor, for they are all the work of his hands; in a moment they shall die and the mighty shall be taken away without hand,*] and then all their thoughts perish, the day of life is the time for labour, when the night of death comes no Man can work? Now the grinders cease, and those that look out of the Windows be dark'ned, and the desire shall fail, because Man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets. *Eccl.* 12. 3, 4, 5.

Ahitophel was a Man of great Wisdom and Understanding, but when his Breath was stopp'd, his Mouth was shut too, all his thoughts perished, nor could there be any further opportunity to consult that Oracle; he could give no more counsel to his Master, his Soul was departed, he was gone down into the pit, where he could think no longer, nor assist *Abisalom* any further with his advice; he had done framing stratagems of War, or projects for Peace, he was returned to his Earth, where all his thoughts perished, and so might his Master too for all him, in whom there was no help.

Quest. But is there no help in Man, nor trust to be had in Persons of the highest degree? Shall we say of them as they said of *Saul*, how shall this Man save us, will not this cause us to despise Magistrates, and to pour out contempt upon Princes?

Resp. The Laws of the first table are no way repugnant to the commands of the second, like parallel lines, or those drawn from the same Centre, to whatever length they are produced do never cross, nor cut each other. The same Apostle, which bids us fear God, does at the same time injoin us to honour the King, who is set on high, as a Candle upon an Hill, that we may have an eye upon him, and regard to him. It's true, the second cause ought not to be revered as, nor ranked in the same order with the first,
but

but only to be considered as it's moved by, and actuated from, the supreme agent. Our wheels would stand still were they not driven on by the Elastick force and power of the Spring. The Disciples had no reason to sacrifice to their own net, or skill for the great draught of Fish they caught; for till it pleased God to bring the Shole together, they laboured but in vain, they did *magno conatu nihil agere. Luke 5. 5.* But next to the influencing power of Divine Providence, inferiour Agents may have their just esteem and regard. We know indeed, that the race is not to the swift, nor the Battel to the strong, nor riches to Men of understanding. But the over-ruling Power and Providence of God turns the Scales, and determines all things as pleaseth him. Though in the ordinary method of his Government, he makes his Magistrates, who are but Men, to be Spirits, and those Ministers a flame of Fire, instruments in his hand for the safety of Mankind, considered either in a natural, civil, or spiritual capacity. To whom we may flee for succour in our distress, as they are Messengers sent by God to do his Will, and to be his Ministers to us for good. Always reserving the glory due to himself, as the supreme Governour, and universal Monarch of Heaven and Earth. Those whom St. Paul healed were highly sensible of the favour, and paid a just respect for so great a kindness. They honored us with many honours. *Acts 28. 10.* But the Apostles were very carefull that God's honour should not be ascribed to the Creatures, who are only substitutes to act by his Authority and Power derived to them, for the purposes of his glory. *Acts 3. 12.* And when St. Peter saw it, he answered to the People, ye Men of Israel, why marvel ye at this, or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own Power or Holiness we had made this Man walk. v. 16. His name, through faith in his name, hath made this Man strong, whom ye see and know; yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.]

Thus

Thus the Ministers of God are not to be honoured, nor trusted to, as the first cause, and original fountain from whence our relief flows; yet they are those conduits and conveyances, through which our help, that stream of refreshments, which makes glad the City of God. And though Princes, as they are the Sons of Men, be in themselves but faint and feeble things, yet they are oftentimes made strong by the Power of the most High; so that our help is not only laid upon them, but they are made by him mighty to save those who put their trust in them.

1st. If we consider, that the Authority by which they act is vested in them from above.

2ly. The wisdom of their Counsels; In the multitude of which there is safety.

3ly. The power of the Sword, which they do not bear in vain.

4ly. The interest of their Confederation and Alliances, by which they are better able to relieve the oppressed, and to help those to right who suffer wrong.

1st. The Authority by which they act is vested in them from above: They have their Credentials from Heaven, and their Commissions are sealed there, from which topick St. Paul argues, and proves our submission to their Commands. Rom. 13. 1. *Let every Soul be subject to the higher powers, for there is no power but of God, the powers that be, are ordained of God; whosoever therefore resists the power, resisteth the Ordinance of God.* Seeing then this Cedar is a Tree of the Lord's planting, why may we not sit under the shadow of it with delight? And if any shall say, how shall this Man save us? or any Prince who is the Son of Man help us? we may reply, that he is God's Vicegerent and Deputy, designed not only to be a terror to evil doers, but a praise and encouragement to them that do well. The Lord hath caused these gourds to spring up to shroud and shelter them. And then, why may we not with *Jonah* be
C exceeding

exceeding glad, and so far trust in them, as God hath made them usefull to secure and defend us from the heat and burthen of the day ?

Princes and Magistrates as they are Men, be made of the same metal with the rest of Mankind, subject to the same infirmities with others of a lower rank and more debased Station; but whilst they bear the Supercription and Image of the Divine Authority stamp'd upon them, they are not only of more value by virtue of that Impression, but may challenge the greater awe and veneration from us. Which may also excuse us from the imputation of vain confidence, whilst we shroud our selves under the lee of their Protection and Government.

21y. From the Wisdom of their Counsels.] This is another sinew and ligament of Civil Government: 2 Kings 18. 20. *Thou say'st I have counsel and strength for the War.*] That sometimes out-does force, is more than its match, and carries it headlong, avoiding its strongest attempts, baffling and defeating the most powerful essays it can make to our destruction. This you may see verified in *Eccl. 9. 14. There was a little City and few Men within it, and there came a great King against it and beseged it, and built great Bulwarks against it, and there was found in it a poor wise Man, who by his Wisdom delivered the City, then said I Wisdom is better than strength.*

They err in Vision, they stumble in Judgment. *Obi.* But you will say Princes are not always Wise, nor great Men always Good: The Lord sometimes gives a People Children to be their Princes, and Babes to rule over them, and carries their Counsel headlong. *Job 5. 13.* This was no small Plague upon *Egypt*: When the Princes of *Egypt* were Fools, and the Counsel of the Wise Counsellors of *Pharaoh* was become brutish. From hence it was that *Egypt* erred in every Work thereof, as a drunken Man staggereth in his Vomit. And so may we reel too and fro, if we put our trust in them, or in the Wisdom of their Counsels.

Resp.

Resp. This is but an accidental punishment of a wicked People, whom the Lord designs to destroy; and so he makes their infatuation not only a Preface and Preface, but cause of their ruine. *Quos perdere vult dementat prius.* Thus when the Lord designed to punish *Ahab*, and that he might fall a prey at *Ramoth Gilead*; he put a lying Spirit into the mouths of his Prophets and Counsellors. So did the Lord hide counsel from *Rehoboam*; nor did he hearken to the counsel of the Old Men, for the cause was from the Lord, that he might rend the Kingdom out of the hand of *Solomon*, as he spake by *Abijah* the *Shilonite* to *Jeroboam*. *1 Kings 11. 31.* So far was the heart of *Pharaoh* hard'ned, that he would not believe nor be advised by *Moses*, God having purposed his ruine in the *Red Sea*; for that despite perhaps, which he had shown to his peculiar People, that were Pilgrims with him in a strange Land.

But the ordinary end of God's setting Rulers over his People is, that they may be his Ministers to them for good, that they may be a shelter to them from the storm, and keep them quiet from the fear of evil. To this end he gives them wise and understanding Hearts, that they may be able to go in and out before the People, and that they may find pasture to refresh them. Hence it is, that the Lord counsels our Counsellors and teacheth our Senators Wisdom; putting this eye into their Heads, by which they see the things which concern the Peace and Welfare of their Subjects, guiding their hands in managing the Helm, and steering the Vessel or Ship of the Common-wealth, through a troublesome Sea into a safe and secure Harbour. Now though we know, that he who gathers the Winds in his Fist, and binds the Waters in a Garment: He whom the Seas obey, is the supreme Pilot; yet it cannot but calm the Minds of the Passengers in the midst of those storms they meet with, that he hath deputed one, whom he ordinarily endues with a Spirit of Government; on

whom next to himself they trust and rely upon for help, though he be but the Son of Man.

3ly. The Power of the Sword,] which he bears not in vain, for he is by that a terrour to evil doers, but a praise and defence to those that do well. By this as it were with a trident he stills the raging of the Sea, I mean quiets the madness of the People. Whether we take this for the civil or military Sword, they have either of them power and edge enough, to cut in pieces, and hamstringing a mutinous and rebellious People; to charm, or awe the unpeaceable and otherwise ungovernable tempers of turbulent and unruly Men, that we may lead a peaceable and quiet life in godliness and honesty. They have a power to turn and brandish these every way, as the Angel his flaming Sword over the Tree of Life; that none of our Enemies at home, or Foes abroad may prevail against us, or approach to hurt us. And may we not brood and shelter our selves under the Wings of that Government, which God hath impowered to shelter us from the talons of those Hawks, which else would prey upon us? May we not with due regard to the Divine Providence, trust to the Wisdom and Conduct of him whom God hath set over us; and whom he hath taught to manage both those Weapons, I mean his civil and military Power, whom God hath enabled to defend the innocent from those who smite with the Fist of wickedness? We have found one that seeks judgment, and relieves the oppressed, who judgeth the Fatherless, and pleads for the Widow. One who hath broach'd that Fountain, whose Waters make glad the City of God: I mean judgment which runs down as water, and righteousness as a mighty stream. Time was, *that instead of well set hair we had baldness, instead of a girdle a rent, instead of a sweet savour a stink; and no wonder for judgment sprang up like hemlock in the furrows of the Field. The Prophet tells us of Princes that were rebellious, and Companions of Thieves,*
who

who judged not the Fatherless, neither did the cause of the Widow come up before them. Oh how was our faithfull City become an Harlot, righteousness lodged in it, but then Murtherers? When the civil Sword of Justice was no better than a murdering knife, which shed the blood of many an innocent and eminent Person, and Patriot of his Country. When the greatest cruelty and oppression put on the garb of justice, and form of Law: Whilst it made havock in the midst of us, ripping up the Bowels of those Worthies, and rissing their Families for no other crime, than the love they bore to our Church and State, our Religion and Properties; for standing in the gap and maintaining our bank against the swelling tide of that Religion, which hath neither God for its Author, nor his word for its rule. Oh the oppression that was then in our Gates! the Complaints that were then in our Streets, which as they rent our hearts, and deafned our ears, so they entred into the Ears of the Almighty, who heard our cry and delivered us when we were in our distress. When our Nation was deserted the civil and military Swords were, like the Shield of *Saul* upon Mount *Gilboa*, vilely cast away; God was pleased to put them into a more steady hand, and stretched-out arm, which have wounded our Enemies under the Fifth Rib, that the very Bowels of that design formed against us are gush'd out, as having received its fatal stroke, and deadly wound, never to live or revive more; if we do not again weave the Spider's Web, or hatch the Cockatrice Eggs, which neither now nor formerly could have been sprung so successfully, had not an over-glowing zeal (for we scarce knew what, brooded and enforced them.

Too many of which have suck'd in that Venome, which we find hard to expel. No antidote that we can meet with in the dispensatories, either of Scripture or Reason, have proved sufficiently effectual to root out the Poison of those

Doctrines,

Isai. 1. 23.

Isai. 5. 7.

We look d
for judg-
ment, but
behold op-
pression for
righteous-
ness; but be-
hold a cry.

Doctrines, which in the time of their defection they drank out of the Cup of Abominations ; I mean of that great Whore, which caused many in our faithful City to become Harlots, who were once the Virgin Daughters of our *Sion* ; but have more reason than *Jephthah's* in another sense, to go upon the Mountains and bewail their Virginity, who suffered themselves to be defiled and deflowered, enticed and seduced by the Pimps and Panders of their Religion : Parting with their precious Faith for those Beads and Bracelets they carry in their hands, selling their Religion, which was far more valuable than Silver, yea, more to be esteemed than fine Gold, for those sacred toys, and consecrated baubles, which have proved a dearer purchase than those Apes and Peacocks, which the Merchants of *Hiram* traded for.

But when will these Runagades return and remember from whence they are fallen ? The worst we wish them is, that they would be zealous and repent. The Lord hath given you a space of repentance, and if you repent not, he will cast you, and those you have committed Fornication with, into a Bed of great tribulation. *Rev. 2. 21, 22.* The Lord would purge you, but if you will not be purged, how justly may he say you shall not be purged, until I cause my fury to rest upon you ? But I have followed these straying Brethren too far out of the way ; and therefore 'tis time to return, and bless that Divine Goodness, which hath placed a Prince upon the Throne, and girded him with a Sword, which hath defended us from the Enemy and Avenger, Oppression at home, and Violence from abroad ; he hath kept that Wolf from our doors, which is fat with the Blood of the Slain, his murdered Subjects and Neighbours ; as if the words of the Prophet were fulfilled in our days. *Behold a King shall Reign in righteousness, and a Prince shall rule in judgment : And a Man shall be as a hiding place from the Wind, and a covert from the Tempest,*

as

as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. Isa. 32. 1, 2.

4ly. The Interest of their Confederations and Alliances; though a single Arrow may be soon snapd, yet a bundle of them is of that united force, as not to be readily broken. If Princes take Counsel together they stand the stronger, if they associate themselves they cannot be easily broken in pieces: Like the sides of a roof, they lean against, and support one another. By means of a strict Alliance and Association, our neighbouring Provinces quitted themselves from an heavy Yoke, and horrid Inquisition. And though they were at no small expence of Blood and Treasure, in asserting their Liberties; yet by God's blessing, and their steady union, they became their own Men in despite of that project, which was framed to make them * Slaves to *Spain*, and Vassals to *Rome*. The Professors of whose Religion being like those who are infected with the Plague; they are not contented to be miserable alone, but have (as they say it is the nature of that Disease) a passionate desire to convey it unto others. Being a speckled and ring-straked Herd; they cannot endure those who have not the like spots and blemishes with themselves. And that our state and circumstances had been this day incomparably sad, there's none among us (who was not confederate with the Enemies of our Church and State) so slow of heart to believe, but will confess, had not our Friends and Allies come over and helped us; who being tempted themselves, knew the better how to relieve and succour those that were tempted; yea, at this very day, there is an overflowing scourge, which bears hard against us, threatening that fatal deluge which will make our Land bright with misery, or our Fields red with Blood; but thanks be to God more Hands than our own are at Work, to prevent the Breach, and maintain our Bank against them. And why may we not so far trust in him, whom God hath set over

* See the History of the Wars of Flanders by Cardinal Bentivoglio, Book first.

over us, as joined in Alliance with those Potent Princes and States, that have counsel and strength for the War, as is consistent with a due regard to the Divine Providence? And though in the Sons of Men there be no help, and consequently no confidence to be had in them, separately and in themselves considered; yet as united together, and especially as influenced with Power from above, they may become mighty to save; a staff of Bands which will not run into our hands and pierce us, though we lean upon it. But lest we should improve this too far, as if we argued against the Text, let us take the Prophet's advice, and *cease from Man whose breath is in his nostrils, for wherein is he to be accounted of?* Isai. 2. 22. The Psalmist places him in the best light, and considers him in the highest exaltation, and most advantageous circumstances; and yet at last concludes, *that it's better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man; yea, it's better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in Princes.* Psal. 118. 9. He was a King himself, who in the Siege of Samaria said to the Woman, when she cryed in her extremity, *If the Lord does not help thee, whence should I?* 2 Kings 6. 27. If then we shall be such foolish Builders as to lay our Foundation on the Sand, we shall need no Spirit of Prophecy to foretell the fate of our Structure. We may drink of the Brook in the way, and refresh our selves with those running streams. But if we do not lift up the head to Heaven, and own that to be the Fountain in which are all our fresh Springs, we forget our Maker, hewing to our selves Cisterns, which though they be not broken, yet are of that limited measure, and stinted capacity, that they are soon exhausted and drawn dry, not affording one drop of refreshment to a thirsty and panting Soul.

4ly. What improvement may we make from hence?

1st. The

1st. The first thing I shall give an hint of is ; that if we may not seek for shelter under the protection and lee of Sovereign Power, what help can we expect from the Sons of Men, placed in a lower rank and inferiour order ? If there be no security or blessing to be had under the warm Sun ; what influence can we hope for, from the lesser Planets ? If a shield of bras can't defend us, but we are pierced through with divers cares and sorrows, how can a cobweb shroud us, or quench those fiery darts which are shot at us ? This have been sufficiently experimented by those, who notwithstanding the interest of their Friends and Families, their honourable Alliances, with Persons of great Wealth and noble Extraction, yet could never be secured from the most fatal stroke, but have fallen as a sacrifice to the rage and malice of their implacable and bloody Enemies. I could name many of our *English* Patriots, which stood in the gap till they were swept away with that over-flowing tide, which bore so hard upon them.

But what need we put a difference betwixt Persons of the highest, and those of a more inferiour order, *when Men of low degree are vanity, and Men of high degree are a lie.* Pf. 62. 9.

2ly. And therefore seeing that they are too weak to support us, it were well they would not lean too hard upon themselves ; that they would not suppose their nest to be built upon a Rock, too strong to be forced, too high to be climbed. Alas ! as to their natural capacities they are made of the same mass with the rest of Mankind ; it hath pleased the Potter to make the Vessel of honour and dishonour of the same Clay ; so that the Princes Pitcher is as soon broken at the Fountain as the Peasants, who upon this account are upon even terms ; the Cedars and the Sycomores grow upon the same level, being equally obnoxious to the dint of the Ax, and violence of the Winds. Isai.

Jan. 30.

Isai. 10. 33. *The Lord of Hosts will lop the bough with terror, and the high ones of stature shall be hewn down.* This day was this Scripture fulfilled among us, when it pleased God to suffer the tallest Cedar in our Forest to become a Prey to the Ax, and to be hewed up at the very roots. He that was set over us by God, to be our Ruler, and Supreme Prince and Governour, was given up to the strivings of the People, and fell as a Sacrifice to their fury at the Gates of his Palace, where he laid besmeared in his Blood, as though he had not been anointed with Oyl. Oh! tell it not in *Gath*, publish it not in the Streets of *Askelon*, lest the *Romish Philistines* triumph, lest those uncircumcised in hearts and ears should rejoice, who decry sometimes the fact as unpardonable, which would have been esteemed by them a thing meritorious (as taking off so great an Enemy to their Cause) had it been perpetrated by the hand of a *Jesuit*, or *Jacobine Frier*. But this is a sore which process of time hath skinned over, and I am very unwilling to rub it till it bleeds afresh. 'Tis pity to blow those Embers which are almost dead and buried in their own Ashes into a new Flame, and enkindle fresh heart-burnings among us. What we have now to do is, to endeavour to atone (if it may be) our former defects of duty to those who were set over us, by doubling our acts of Loyalty and Allegiance to that Prince who now Reigns among us; who hath endeared himself to us by all that could oblige a miserable, and (I wish there were not too much reason to say) an ungrateful People. Who being as Fire-brands pluck'd out of the fire so lately extinguish'd, are bringing new fewel, and by sparks of their own, endeavouring to kindle it: Striving to bring back, and cause a reverse of all those miseries, which this blessed instrument in the hand of Divine Providence, so effectually saved and rescued us out of; as if the extirpation of our Faith and Religion were a proper object of our zeal, and fit employment for our

our new Ambition. And as if Oppression and Slavery (the Burthens we so lately groaned under) were now become the matter of our choice, and valued as Pearls of the greatest price. Which looks as if we could be easie under nothing more than those calamities and miseries, which were but as yesterday, the sad and dismal Theme of our Complaints. We had no sooner tasted of liberty, and but just seen how good it was, but our teeth are set on edge for those four Grapes which made us cry out, our Bowels, our Bowels, we are pained at the very heart: Accounting our *Moses* whom God sent to deliver us, our great Task-master, and only Oppressour. Wishing now we are got into *Canaan*, a Land flowing with Milk and Honey; I mean our Liberties and Religion, that we might return into *Egypt*, and that we might again labour in those brick-kilns and iron furnaces as in the fire. These are so far from trusting in their Princes, that they are daily pouring out their Complaints, and Contempts upon them.

But as Moral virtue hath an extremity on both hands, viz. a Gulph of defect on one side, and a Rock of excess on the other; so with such like extremities have some among us been chargable in the case before us. For whilst some have said, how shall this Man save us, and brought him no presents? Others have been apt to say, behold the God which delivered us out of the hands of our Enemies, who hath brought us out of *Egypt*, into *Canaan*; who hath broken off our Yoke, and translated us into glorious light and liberty. It will then be the office, and art of Christian Prudence to steer us so evenly, that whilst we give to *Cæsar* the things that are *Cæsar's*; we may not rob God of his Glory, nor give it to another.

We may rest upon our staff in our passage through the Wildernels, but we ought especially to lean upon our Beloved. Our deliverance have been very sweet to our taste, and we must be very ungratefull not to kiss the hand that

brought it to us: But we must not forget the Rock from whence it was hewn. We may value the stream, but we must especially adore the Fountain, from whence it did originally flow. And have not our leaning so hard, and laying so great a stress upon our staff caused it to buckle under us, as we have observed already. Because our Bow was doubly strung, we said that shall save us. Which perhaps is one sin for which the Lord hath been displeased with us, and hath caused him to shoot that Arrow from Heaven, which hath slain one of our Princes; and hath justified the truth of that Maxime, that though they be stiled Gods, yet they shall die like Men. For her Breath is gone forth, she is returned to the dust. From which we see crowned Heads are no way exempt, nor privileged. A Providence which seems little less surprizing, than the command God gave to *Abraham* of sacrificing his only Son, of whom it was said in *Isaac* shall thy Seed be called. We could not but think that the Honour of God, and Welfare of our Church, were justly provided for, when he had blest it with such a nursing Mother; we could not but hope, that Religion and Piety, which had so long been in a languishing, and valetudinary condition must needs have revived, and assumed new life and vigour, not only by the influence of her power, but warmth of her example, of whom without flattery it might have been said, in respect to her devout and constant exercise of Religion, look on her and do likewise. For let a Prince weave never such good Laws, a debauch'd and bad life unravels all the contexture. *Regis ad exemplum totus componitur orbis.* Men being more apt to fashion themselves by the Scheme of his actions, than the form of his Government. But when we had so great hopes, that Godhead effectually secured the true Religion, and settled the Kingdom of his dear Son, by promoting such a Person to the Throne, whom he had so eminently fitted for such great ends, and noble purposes. Our Nation

tion seemed like a Vessel under a full Sail, fill'd with a prosperous and fair Gale, steering a steady course towards a desired Port, we seemed secure of an happy arrival, as though we had attained, and our deliverance was already perfect, all fears of a Shipwrack were taken away. When, as it were in a moment, our Pilot drops, our Vessel sinks down to rights, and all the Cargo of our Hopes, and Thoughts on board there, perished. Good God! How unsearchable are thy ways, and how are thy paths past finding out? Thy ways are not as our ways, nor thy thoughts as our thoughts. It was thy doing, and therefore we shall be dumb, and not open our mouths to charge thee foolishly; that it may be said of us, as it was of *Job*, in all this we did not sin with our lips, *for why should we receive good, and not evil at the hand of the Lord?* To what purpose is it to go to her grave to weep there, who though dead, yet methinks we hear yet speaking; Weep not for me, but for your selves, and for your sins, for which God is displeased? These, these were the Traitors that shortened her Reign, and that would not let this excellent Princess to rule any longer over us. That have provoked God to take her from us. But though her Earthly Crown be fallen from her Head; yet this is our comfort, that we have good reason to believe, she changed it for that which fadeth not away, reserved in the Heavens for her. But what now remains is to do justice to our selves, I mean to bring those sins, those Enemies which have done us this mischief, and smite them and slay them, which have deprived us of such a Queen, as scarce ever adorned the *English* Throne; for though others may have done virtuously; yet, she hath excelled them all. *Prov. 31. 29.*

But yet we have *post naufragium tabulam*. The Lord hath left us a Prince upon the Throne, a Son of Man in whom we hope there may be some help; the Lord hath not left us comfortless without a Ruler, without a Governour;

nour ; one whom he once made able to save us. He hath delivered us, he doth deliver us, and we trust God will by him still deliver us ; I mean our King, who yet lives, and long may he live to rule over us. To whom we ought to be subject for the Lord's sake ; yet not to place him in the Lord's stead. 'Tis true, the anointed of the Lord is the breath of our nostrils, but his breath is in his too, which soon goes forth, and then he must return to his Earth, of which the instance I have given you of his Royal Consort is a sad, but convincing proof, who by a sudden stroke is fallen in our high places, as though she had not been anointed with Oyl. When she was in a green and flourishing condition, it pleased the Lord to pluck up this Plant of Righteousness by the Roots, under whose shadow we sat with great delight. But we hope only to transplant her into a better place, into that Paradise where she may be a Tree of Life for ever and ever.

But I cannot dismiss you till I have added something by way of reproof, of some spightfull and unreasonable Men, who would force a sense from the words very far from the meaning of them ? for though we ought not to repose our confidence, or put our trust in Princes for relief, so neither ought we to offer despite to them, or pour out any contempt upon them. The counsel which *Solomon* gave, was not to curse the King in our thought, nor the Rich in our bed-chamber, for the Bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall reveal the matter. Eccl. 10. 20. Yet, there's some who are troubled with the over-flowing of the Gall ; who have vented their resentments and passions in many bitter Complaints. They say 'tis true, there's little reason to trust in Princes, or in the Son of Man in whom there is no help ; great (say they) was the freedom we fancied, the ease and liberty we flattered our selves with, from the late change and revolution of State ; but we see, we did but change our Yoke, and put on new Fetters,

ters, and for which we pay very dear too. Assessments return so often, and heavy upon us, that we are pressed down under the insufferable weight and burthen of them, till we scarce know how to provide for our Families, either Bread to eat, or Raiment to put on, and how then can we be content? 'Tis true, we enjoy the exercise of our Religion, but the sour sauce and bitter herbs which attend our Passover, make us even to abhor the Sacrifice it self for their sake. Would to God we were in *Egypt*, rather than thus to die in the Wilderness; for our promised Land proves no better. We were told of Milk and Honey; but instead thereof, we are filled with bitterness, and made drunk with Wormwood. The little Finger of the present Government, proving heavier than the Loins of our late Reign; and yet this is he, who was promised to deliver our *Israel* out of all its troubles. And these be some of those grievances, which are wrung, or rather poured out of their Cup, which is so full of the tears of their Complaints.

When the hand of *Pharaoh* was upon us, and when we were swelkt in the iron Furnaces; Oh then! how strong were our cries, by which we solicited Heaven to send a *Moses* to deliver us? When we laboured as in the fire, how fervent were our Prayers for a *Lazarus* to cool our inflamed tongues? which we gnawed for anguish, when we durst not use them in venting those Passions, which like fire burnt within. But when it pleased God to deliver us, and set us at liberty from those hard Task-masters; Oh! then how easie was the Yoke, and light was that Burthen, which like *Iffachar* we sunk and buckled under? Now we look back to *Sodom*, and with our selves in those Flames, out of which we were so lately pluck'd as Firebrands. 'Tis true our Taxes run high, but no higher than the emergency of our Affairs, and necessity of our State require. And shall we grutch to part with some of our Earth to maintain our Banks, which are a Barrier against that swelling Tide which bears

bears so hard upon us? Or had we rather that over-flowing scourge should break into, and pass through our Land, and turn it into a Field of Blood? Shall we let our Vessel sink rather than cast some part of our lading over-board? When *Mahomet* was coming up against *Constantinople*, their Emperour sent to the Citizens to aid him with Money, that he might defend them and their City from so barbarous and cruel an Enemy. But they made some petty excuses as we now-a-days, *viz.* Alas! I cannot do it, I have a Family to provide for: Though we may be threatned, yet what we fear may never come upon us. Our danger is remote, and *Hannibal* is not yet at our Gates; nor hath the wicked approached so nigh as to hurt us. And thus they dallied with their own fate, till their impending ruin fell upon them like a millstone, and ground them to powder: Who became a rich and easie prey to the rage and ravage of a Blood-thirsty and implacable Enemy; who not only rifled the treasures they were so stanch of, but satiated himself with their Blood: Commanding at every Meal so many of the Nobility to be Beheaded, as might glut his revenge, whilst he was pampering of his Body: Fulfilling the words of our Saviour with some alteration; He that will save his Life and Estate, shall lose it, but he that will loose his Life and Estate for his King and Country's sake, the same shall save it.

Num. 14.
37.

But let not us murmur as some of these also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. 1 Cor. 10. 10.

Time was when an extravagant loyalty was the whole duty of Man; when Non-resistance and Passive-obedience, were the fundamental Articles of their Faith, which in the least to dispute or doubt of, went for Heresie or Treason.

But now there's no Fetters strong enough to cramp the Prerogative of the Prince, or curb his power, nor greater service to be done to the Common-wealth, than to put a bridle into the mouth, and hook into the nostrils of Sovereign

raign Authority: Accounting those who are invested with it, like the Horse or Mule which hath no understanding. These are they, who not long since would construe the looks, and strein Men's words of no bad sense, to accuse them of disloyalty, and cause them to suffer by *innuendo's*. But now to disobey Magistrates, to disown, and deny Allegiance to their Prince, is a vertue they bear themselves upon.

Some Men have been so wise and modest, that if they had any Opinion or Faith contrary to their duty, they would keep it to themselves, that they might not affront the Powers that were in being, nor expose themselves to their just censures. But these are spitting their Poison where-ever they come, huffing and hissing at every one that is not of so poisonous a brood as themselves. And that they may be known to be so, wear some distinguishing Character, and by mark, that their folly may be known to all Men. Which they durst not do, if they did not put their trust in a Prince, whom we hope God is about to humble, and depend upon the Son of Man, that shall never be able to help them. *But whilst some trust in Charriots, and some in Horses, we will remember the name of the Lord our God. For happy is the Man who bath the God of Jacob for his refuge; yea, blessed are the People, who have the Lord for their God.* Which is a much safer retreat than we can otherwise make, *by putting our trust in Princes, or in the Son of Man, in whom there is no help.* Ps. 20. 7.

F I N I S.